

Testimony of Alexandria Reid
Student at Asnuntuck Community College
Appropriations Committee

February 15, 2017

Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Alexandria Reid, I am a military veteran, and a welding student at Asnuntuck Community College. I am here today because attending Asnuntuck has changed my life. Since beginning classes I, with the help of many faculty and staff, have achieved personal, professional and financial goals that would otherwise have not been attainable.

The instructors that I have encountered are some of the most selfless and motivating people I have ever had the privilege of learning from. The cohesive environment they provide is, in itself, motivation to learn and to push ourselves. When students need answers or more time for skill building, we can always count on our instructors. They are creative and adapt very easily to individual learning styles of the students and love being challenged just as much as the students do. I have watched all of them get excited when we ask to try new processes or for instructions on new machines. They thrive on teaching and we know that we have the resources in our instructors to accomplish our educational goals.

The team that we have, would be a puzzle with missing pieces should any of our instructors be excused from their employment. Industry standards are set here at Asnuntuck, and to reduce the budget, along with the well-educated and experienced staff, would be a disservice to not only students, but to employers all across New England, as well.

Asnuntuck has created a new manufacturing building for training in advanced manufacturing technologies. We have the facilities, instructors, and teaching experience to fill the seats, so why would we allow them to remain empty? Or worse, to fill them, but not have the appropriate materials and instructors to educate? At Asnuntuck, we aren't taught how to barely pass our classes and to try to get a job. We are taught how to be the best and employers from all over the state come here for future employees. They demand a high industry standard, and at Asnuntuck, that is exactly what they get.

In addition to the manufacturing department, I have had several general education classes toward my Associates degree, and there is no difference in expectation and work ethic requirements. Teachers and staff in the arts, sciences and medical, and manufacturing programs demand the best, and they teach the best. And most important of all, they lead by example.

Asnuntuck also has a program for young children of students, which reduces the amount of travel I have every day, as well as my child care costs. By being able to utilize the free child care, I have been able to pay down student loan debt and buy a home for my family. My son, Wyatt, loves and trusts the people responsible for his care and I love the fact that I can see my child during the day and know that he is properly cared for while I pursue my education. The fact that Asnuntuck has chosen to extend learning opportunities to my children is the epitome of the cohesive and supportive nature of all of their programs. They know that to support the student they need to acknowledge all aspects of their lives.

Student employment opportunities also help students create a solid foundation for their future. Many students have never had a job before. Being able to work a few hours a week in various positions helps them get positive work experience and references for when they are finished with their education.

Since my enrollment, I am more financially stable, I have been awarded a job with Pratt and Whitney before I could even finish my second semester of education, and best of all, I have a CAREER. There hasn't been a problem unsolved or a question unanswered since I began classes. Asnuntuck Community College has changed my life forever and I am so grateful.